

Farmers' Market Provides Healthy Choices for Produce

The Capitol Midweek Farmers' Market, started May 24 for the benefit of Downtown Employees, helps to expand consumer's choices of fruits and veggies and increase access to high quality produce.

Since the beginning of the market, the number of vendors has grown from five to 20 and attendance has grown to approximately 1,400 people each week.

All of the different colors, smells, and textures of fruits and vegetables signify a wide array of nutrients that are health promoting, from the deep hues of blueberries (potent phytochemicals that may help improve memory), the pungent smell of garlic (sulfur compounds that are great for your blood), to the distinct "mouth-feel" of okra (soluble fiber that can help lower cholesterol). Enjoying a wide variety of fruits and veggies helps increase your chances of having great health for your entire life.



Since May 24, weekly attendance has grown to approximately 1,400 visitors at the Midweek Farmers' Market in front of the Capitol.

Eat plenty of fruits and veggies to:

- Maintain optimal health and **increase energy levels.**
- Decrease your risk of chronic disease, including heart disease and some cancers.
- Maintain optimal eyesight and gastrointestinal health.
- Protect against the effects of aging.
- Maintain a healthy weight.

Consumers have not only been exposed to, but have bought: asparagus, turnips, radishes, beets, kohlrabi, bok choy, snap and sugar peas, greens, rhubarb, Swiss chard, spinach, broccoli, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, strawberries, beans (stringless, butter, and soy to name a few), eggplant, cucumbers, squash, peppers, okra, corn, peaches, and melons.

Our blueberry farmer from Hiawatha, brought and sold more than 300 pounds of blueberries over a span of four market dates.

Go to <http://www.healthykansans2010.org/kslean/> to download newsletters about the Capitol Market including recipes and tips for selecting, preparing and storing produce from the market.

For more information on the Farmers' Market, contact Jennifer Church, (785) 296-8060, or email: jchurch@kdhe.state.ks.us.